

## Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A socket storage device for retaining ratchet wrench sockets comprising:  
a rail;  
a base portion adapted to be connected to the rail;  
a post adapted to accept a socket thereon, the post extending outwardly from the base portion;  
a retention device associated with the post, the retention device adapted to retain the socket to the post;  
a release mechanism associated with the post and adapted to release the socket from the post.
2. The socket storage device of claim 1 further comprising a biasing member adapted to expel the socket from the post when the release mechanism is depressed.
3. The socket storage device of claim 1 wherein the release mechanism includes a sleeve surrounding the base member, the sleeve adapted to be urged toward the base portion to release the socket.
4. The socket storage device of claim 3, further including a slide key having a first leg and a second leg substantially perpendicular to the first leg.
5. The socket storage device of claim 4, wherein the first leg of the slide key is adapted to displace a socket detent mechanism.
6. The socket storage device of claim 5, wherein the second leg of the slide key is adapted to be connected to sleeve, wherein depressing the sleeve moves the slide key.
7. The socket storage device of claim 6, further including a biasing member adapted to bias the side key away from the base portion.
8. A socket storage device for retaining ratchet wrench sockets comprising:

a base portion adapted to retain the position of the socket storage device;  
a post adapted to accept a socket thereon, the post extending outwardly from the base portion;  
a retention device associated with the post, the retention device adapted to retain the socket to the post;  
a release mechanism associated with the post and adapted to release the socket from the post; and  
a biasing member adapted to expel the socket from the post when the release mechanism is depressed.

9. The socket storage device of claim 8 wherein the release mechanism includes a sleeve associated with the base member, the sleeve adapted to be depressed to release the socket.

10. The socket storage device of claim 9, where the device further includes a slide key associated with the post, the slide key having a first leg and a second leg substantially perpendicular to the first leg.

11. The socket storage device of claim 10, wherein the first leg of the slide key is adapted to displace a socket detent mechanism.

12. The socket storage device of claim 10, wherein the second leg of the slide key is adapted to be connected to the sleeve, wherein depressing the sleeve moves the slide key.

13. The socket storage device of claim 8 further comprising a rail adapted to accept a plurality of base members thereon.

14. The socket storage device of claim 13, wherein the base member includes a retention ball adapted to retain the relative position of the base member with respect to the rail.

15. A socket storage device for retaining ratchet wrench sockets comprising:  
an elongated rail;

a plurality of socket storage connectors, each adapted to accept and retain a socket, said

socket storage connectors including a base portion adapted to be connected to the rail;

a post adapted to accept a socket thereon, the post extending outwardly from the base portion;

a retention device associated with the post, the retention device adapted to retain the socket to the post;

a release mechanism associated with the post and adapted to release the socket from the post; and

a biasing member adapted to expel the socket from the post when the release mechanism is depressed.

16. The socket storage device of claim 15 wherein the release mechanism includes a sleeve associated with the base member, the sleeve adapted to be depressed to release the socket.

17. The socket storage device of claim 16 where the device further includes a slide key having a first leg and a second leg perpendicularly oriented to the first leg.

18. The socket storage device of claim 17, wherein the first leg of the slide key is adapted to displace a socket detent mechanism.

19. The socket storage device of claim 17, wherein the second leg of the slide key is adapted to be connected to the sleeve, wherein depressing the sleeve moves the slide key.

20. The socket storage device of claim 17, wherein the base portion includes a rail detent mechanism adapted to aid in retaining the position of the socket storage connectors with respect to the rail.

21. The socket storage device of claim 20, further comprising a spring having a first end in contact with the rail detent mechanism and a second end in contact with the side key.

22. A wrench socket retaining and releasing storage apparatus comprising:  
a body;

said body has a base, a shank extending upward therefrom;

said shank terminating in a square drive retaining end;  
a channel extending in said shank and said end;  
a slide key fitting in said channel;  
lock balls carried in a transverse aperture in said end,  
said slide key positively locking the socket in place by displacing said lock balls transversely,  
a lock spring carried on said body;  
a sleeve slidably mounted above said lock spring, said sleeve also engaging said slide key;  
said slide key is manually releasable by action of a sleeve that moves the slide key against said lock spring thereby urging the slide key upward.

23. The storage apparatus of claim 22 further comprising:

a tapered spiral ejector spring being fitted to the body, having a plurality of coils of varying radius, the lower coil having the smallest radius;  
said ejector spring both urging a released socket off the end, and through the tightest, lower coil of the ejector spring, retaining the entire assembly together.

24 The storage apparatus of claim 22 further comprising:

said base is adapted to slidably engage a storage rail;  
said rail is adapted to receive a multiplicity of said storage apparatus;  
said base having a tension ball receiving bore and a rail engaging tension ball carried therein;  
said lock spring urging said tension ball downward, to maintain the apparatus in position on the rail.

25 The storage apparatus of claim 22 further comprising:

said body is formed with a slot extending upward from said base;

said slot communicates with said channel;

said key is formed in a generally inverted “T” shape having an upwardly extending leg and first and second transversely extending arms;

said arms spanning the width of said body;

said first arm engages said sleeve, so that movement of said sleeve moves said key.

26 The storage apparatus of claim 24 further comprising:

said base is formed with opposed beveled edges

said rail is formed with a floor and inwardly turning rims;

said rims formed and arranged to complement the shape of said beveled edges so that said base will be retained on said rail and be slidable between selected positions on said rail.

27. The storage apparatus of claim 24 further comprising:

said apparatus and said rail being formed in a socket storage system comprising one of said rails and a plurality of said storage apparatus.